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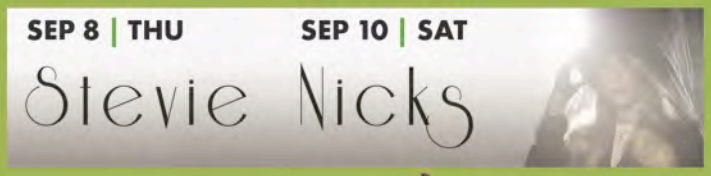

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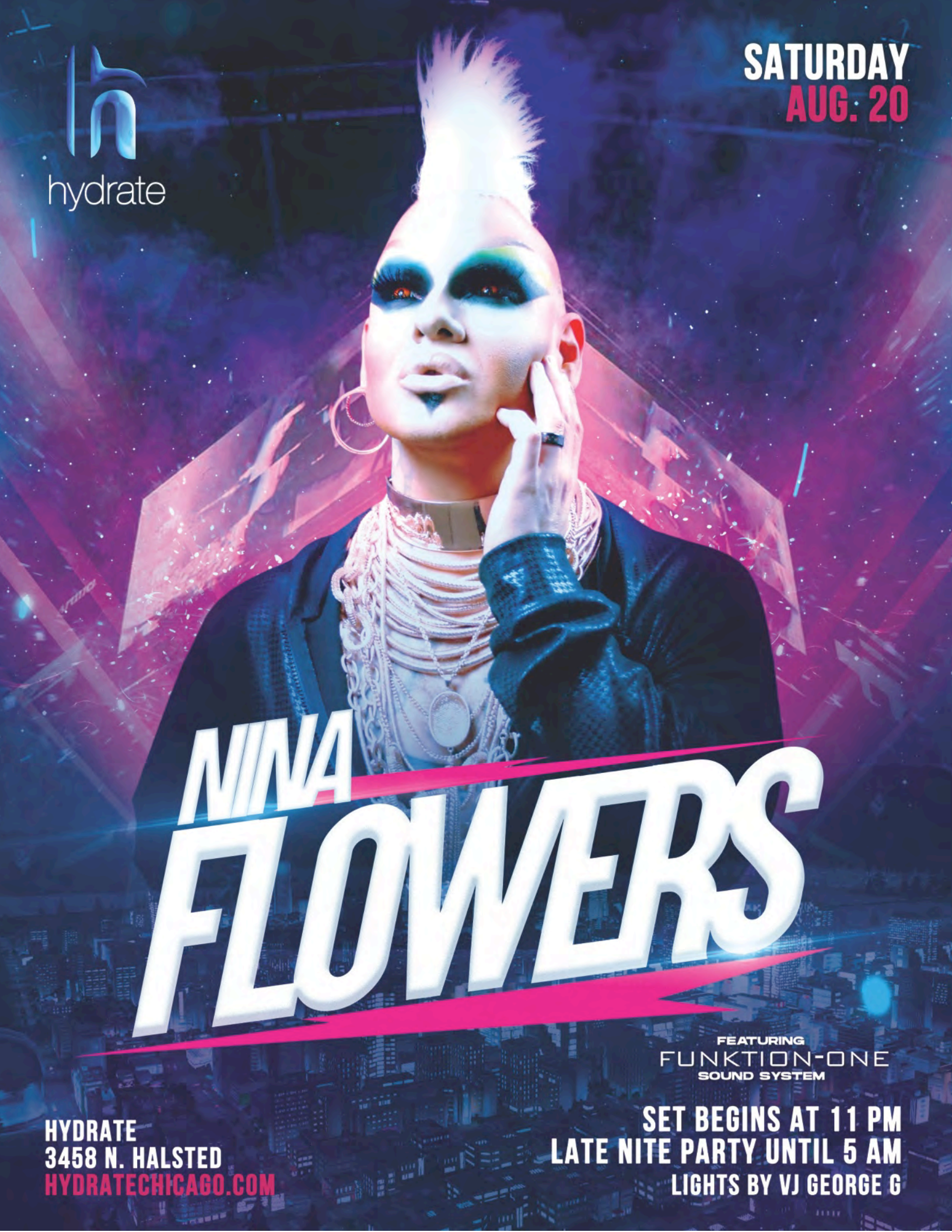
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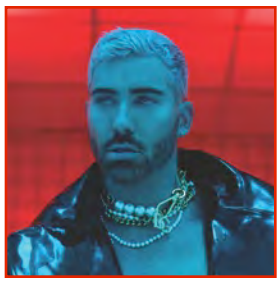

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GRAB BOBBY

Bobby Doll
The Choreographer-Turned-Pop Singer Lights Up Dancefloors with "Blackout"

By Mark Monteroso

Photo ByShaun Vadalla

Bobby Newberry began his career in music as a choreographer for Eminem. Since then, he has danced with a string of the world's top artists including Nicki Minaj, The Pussycat Dolls, Missy Elliot, and Lil' Wayne. His choreography work has also been seen on TV in Dancing with the Stars and X-Factor.

Five years ago, he released his debut EP, The Newberry Special. It included the hit single, "*Dirty Up* (featuring Jessie and The Toy Boys)". This month, he returns to clubs with "Blackout," a hard-pounding, sultry ride with a surprise flip at the end that echoes his love of nightlife and taking parties from 0 to 100. It will be featured on his next EP, releasing soon. We caught up with Bobby Newberry at his home in Los Angeles.

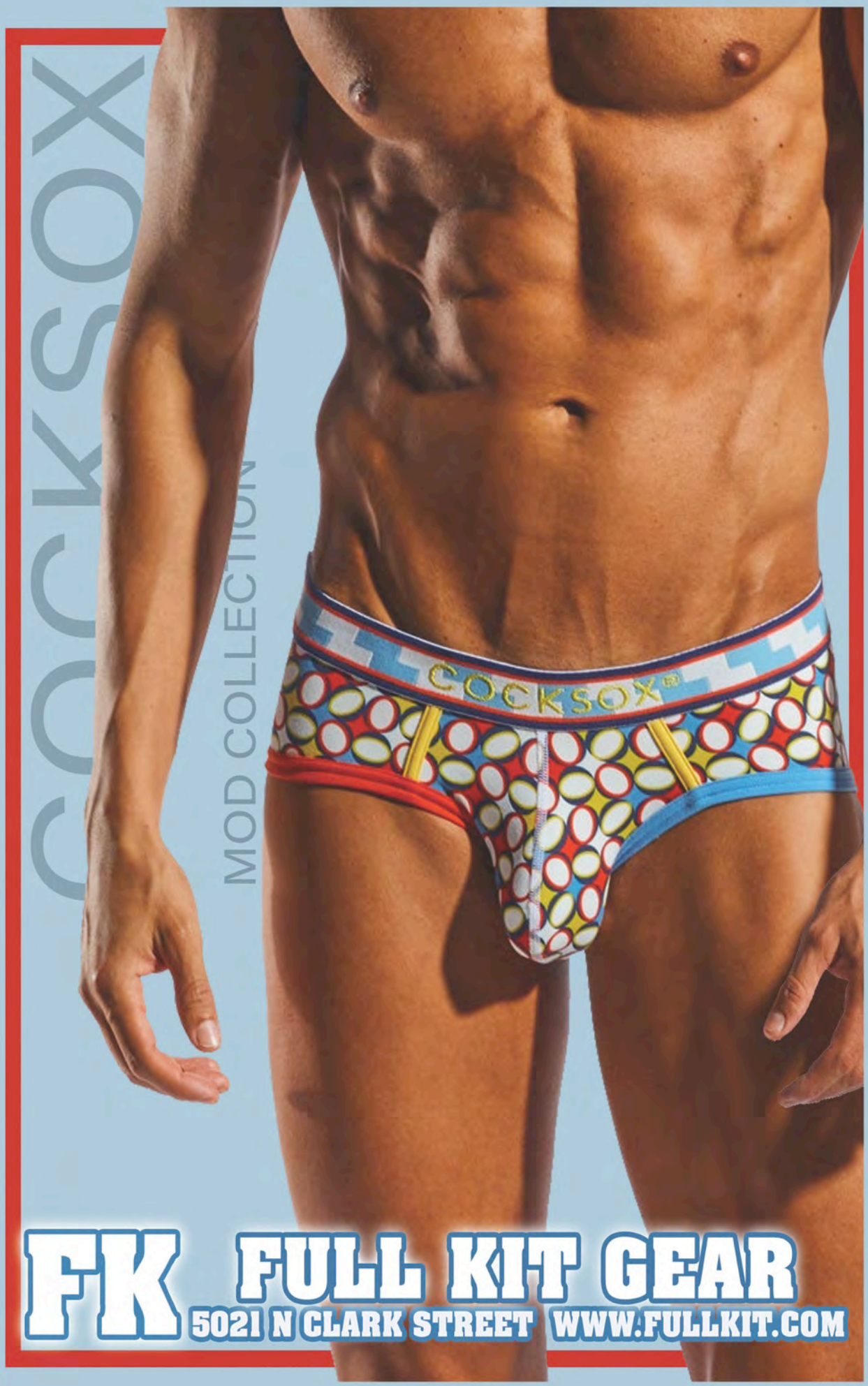
Mark Monteroso:Have you been known to party until you blackout?

Bobby Newberry:I've had a few in my day.

MM:Do you remember your last blackout?
BN: I do! It was after I headlined Miami pride. I went out with my friends and dancers to celebrate and we didn't really eat much but had many, many tequilas.
MM: Where did you wake up?
BN:I woke up in my friend's hotel room, luckily! I couldn't piece together most of the night. I got the play by play from my friend and then I called everyone else I had been with to make sure I didn't do anything I needed to apologize for.

MM:Most of your songs are about nightlife and wild partying.
BN: I have always been drawn to music that makes me want to dance and have fun. To me, music is about creating a vibe; a fun feeling. I figure that if you are going out, my music can help facilitate that journey.

MM:Is that why you live in LA?
BN: Honestly, I rarely go out in LA. Like, ever. Eighty percent of the time, I'm at home chilling in sweat pants. This pandemic has turned me into the biggest homebody. But when I'm out of town, in some new city, then it's different. I am going out and doing and seeing everything that city has to offer!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MM: Where were you born and raised?
BN: I was born in Orange County in California. My mom had me when she was 22 and wasn't ready to have a child at all. Life was really tough, growing up. Thank God I had singing and dancing to throw myself into. It helped to not focus on the many bad things happening around me.

MM: What led to your becoming a choreographer?
BN: In high school, I would freestyle dance moves in my bedroom. I loved coming up with my own routines. I started showing people what I was doing and they wanted to learn the moves, so it kind of turned into a business. I began teaching dances and routines to people as a side hustle.

MM: What mistakes did you make in the beginning of your choreography career?
BN: I was very trusting; way too trusting. Some people can be very shady in this business, especially to young choreographers just starting out. They'll lie, take advantage of your time, steal your choreography, refuse to give you credit.

MM: What do you consider to have been your greatest achievement in dance?
BN: I think it's all of the people that I have touched. So many dancers have reached out to me to say that I inspired them to want to pursue a career in the industry. I love that I have impacted people's lives with my story and my work.

MM: Are you still working as a choreographer or are you now focusing full time on your recording career?
BN: I consider myself an all-around artist. As long as I'm singing, songwriting, working on choreography or doing anything creative, really, I'm happy.

MM: What is the status of you sophomore album?
BN: It's taken forever. It was originally supposed to release it in April 2020 and then the world shut down so I held it. I was then set to release this summer but at the last minute, I decided to write and record more music. I finally have it done now and I am releasing it in September.

MM: What is your idea of perfect happiness today?
BN: To be content and happy with where I am in the moment. I am never like that because I am never satisfied. Something in me is always striving for more which drives me crazy.

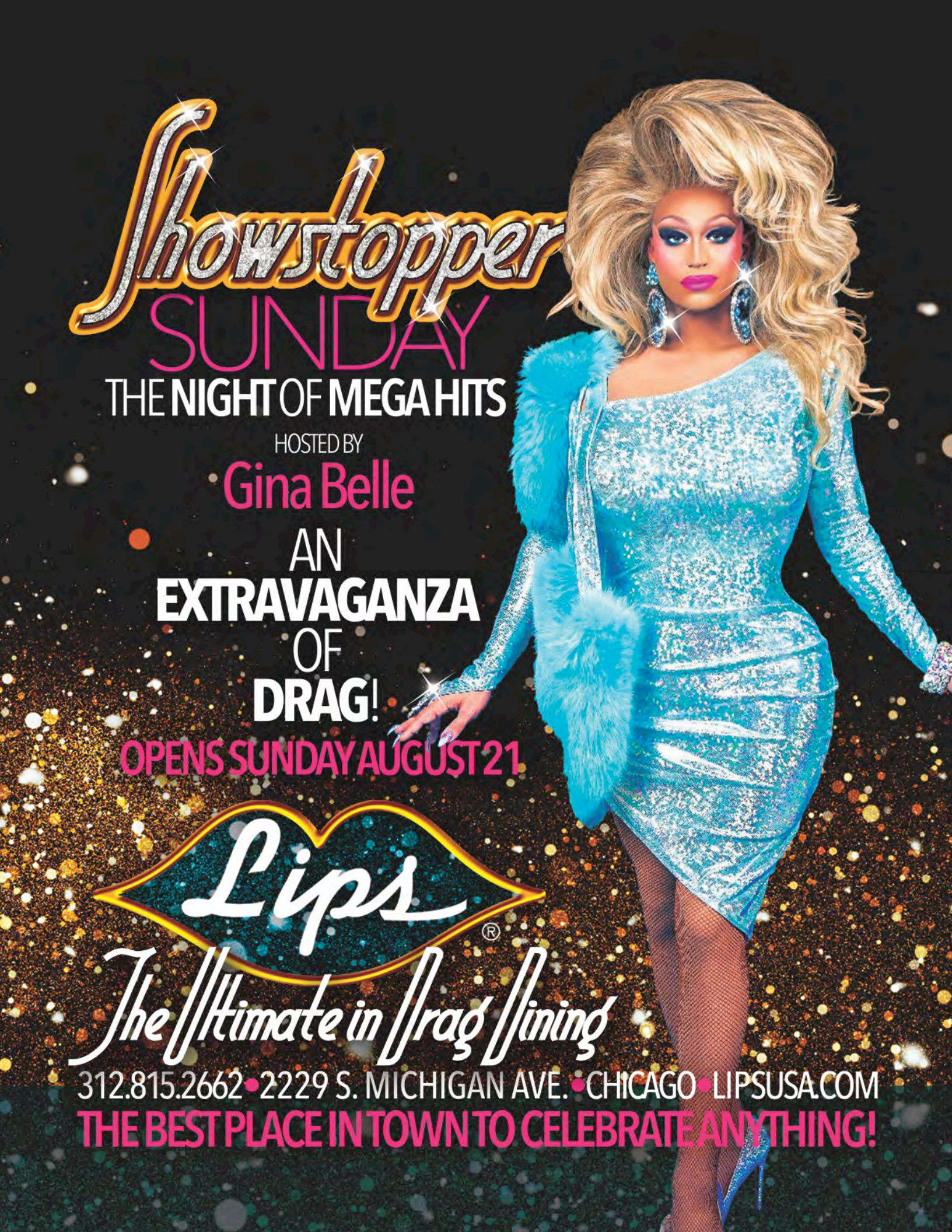
MM: On what occasion do you lie?
BN: I hate liars. I guess there is a time and a place for a little white lie and that's when it stops someone from getting their feelings hurt.

MM: If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?
BN: To not be so hard on myself.

MM: If you could live anywhere on the planet, where would you live?
BN: New York is probably my favorite city in the world but I would also like to live part time in Los Angeles, Miami, a few months in Europe, and I wouldn't mind a nice little Chicago Greystone.

Follow Bobby Newberry on IG @ ***BobbyNewberry***

Photo ByShaun Vadalla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GRAB DALE

From Dale with "Love"

By Gregg Shapiro

Beginning in 1995, with her first movie role in "The Incredibly True Adventure of Two Girls in Love," actor and ally Dale Dickey has been a presence in LGBTQ+ cinema. She appeared in three Del Shores movies, including "Sordid Lives," "Southern Baptist Sissies," and "A Very Sordid Wedding," as well as the "Sordid Lives" TV series. Dickey also received numerous accolades for her performance in 2010's "Winter's Bone," alongside Jennifer Lawrence. In her new movie, "A Love Song" (Bleecker Street), she plays Faye, a woman waiting at a campsite to be reunited with Lito (Wes Studi), an old flame she hasn't seen in years. Dickey gives another stellar performance, one that could potentially win her more awards. Dale was generous enough to make time for an interview before "A Love Song" opens in theaters.

Gregg Shapiro: Dale, I'd like to begin by asking you to say a few words about what made the character of Faye in "A Love Song" appealing to you as an actress.

Dale Dickey: The script was simple and quiet and pure and beautiful. I had not done a lead role and had not been able to play this sort of vulnerability and stillness and quiet. I love the outdoors. I related to her in many ways. It was a challenge that I could not refuse. I was terrified, but I had to do it.

GS: We're glad you did. "A Love Song" is writer/director Max Walker-Silverman's feature-length debut. What was it about Max that made you want to work with him?

DD: Everything. He wrote me a beautiful letter asking me to do this role, telling me why he thought I was right for it. He watched my work over the years. I watched two of his short films. I read his script. I talked with him on Zoom. I just felt the connection. I think that he's a tremendous talent as an artist, at only 27, and he's also quite a fine human being, which was extra icing on the cake.

GS: Faye has two Audubon books on her bookshelf – one a guide to North American birds and one a guide to the night sky. Are birds or constellations things in which you also take an interest?

DD: Oh, yeah! My husband and I lived here for 24 years, and our saving grace is getting the hell out of L.A. and camping. California is a beautiful state. We have a bag of Audubon books that my dad sends us at Christmas for trees and plants and amphibians. So, we're always looking stuff up. I have a whole night sky chart for when we go camping. So, I could relate to that. I love nature. I grew up in nature. So that was something, instinctually, that I could relate to.

GS: As secluded as her campsite is, Faye still has social interactions with Postman Sam and young Dice and the cowhands. These scenes are among the lighter ones in terms of humor and reminded me a little bit of early Coen brothers movies.

DD: Mmmm [laughs].

GS: Do you also see the similarities?

DD: Absolutely. I love that aspect. When I first read the script, I was like, "There's no dialogue. Who are these weird people?" And then I reread it and I was like, "OK, I get it." Max's idea is once you put yourself out into the world, particularly out into the wilderness, you meet all kinds of

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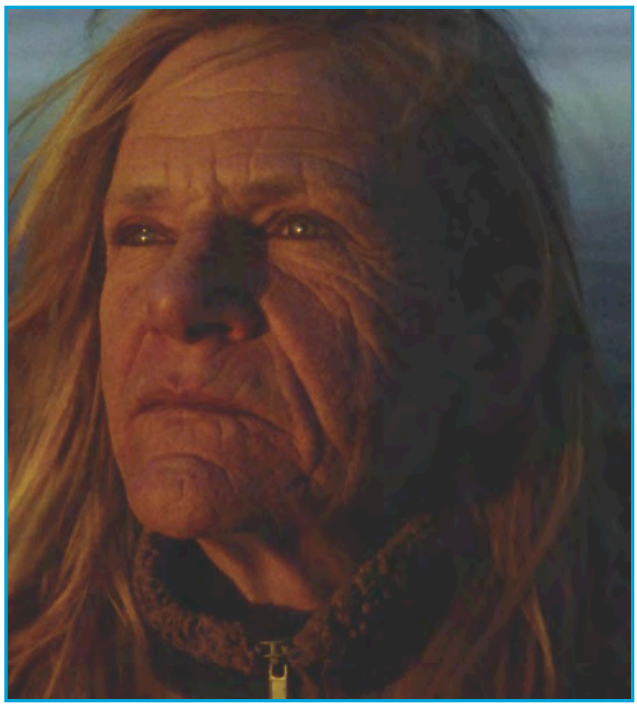
strange, interesting, quirky characters that can change your life in different ways. To me, when I first read it, I thought, “Are these real people, or is Faye imagining them?” But they're integral to the story. They each play a part in her progression. I love that! Particularly, the postman. That was a late addition to the script, it was not in the original. This was right around the time that, and I don't want to get into politics, but that former president put that idiot into the Postal Service.

GS: Yes. His name was Louis DeJoy, but I called him DeJoyless.

DD: Yeah! The Orange Idiot put DeJoy in and they were tearing apart the postal department. I was like, “Friggin’ A that there's a guy delivering the mail to the desert because mail’s important!” People get mail! I love that tribute to how important U.S. mail is.



GS: For the first half of “A Love Song,” Faye is waiting for the arrival of Lito (Wes Studi), an old flame she hasn’t seen in years. Faye and Lito have wonderful scenes of reminiscing. Have you ever had the experience of reconnecting with an old friend, and if so, were you able to pick up your friendship where you left off?

DD: Yes. I'd say not necessarily romantically. I was very shy and a very weird theater child in high school, so I didn't really date. I just had a lot of good guy friends. The same in college. There was one guy in college that was just a good friend, and we would joke about, “Well, if we're not married at 30, we'll get together.” But we were just good friends. It was never gonna work. But I have a lot of male friends that I think about fondly, but no one necessarily romantically.

GS: As one can glean from the title “A Love Song,” music plays a supporting role in the movie, whether Faye is listening to songs on the radio or singing with Lito. How does music figure into your life?

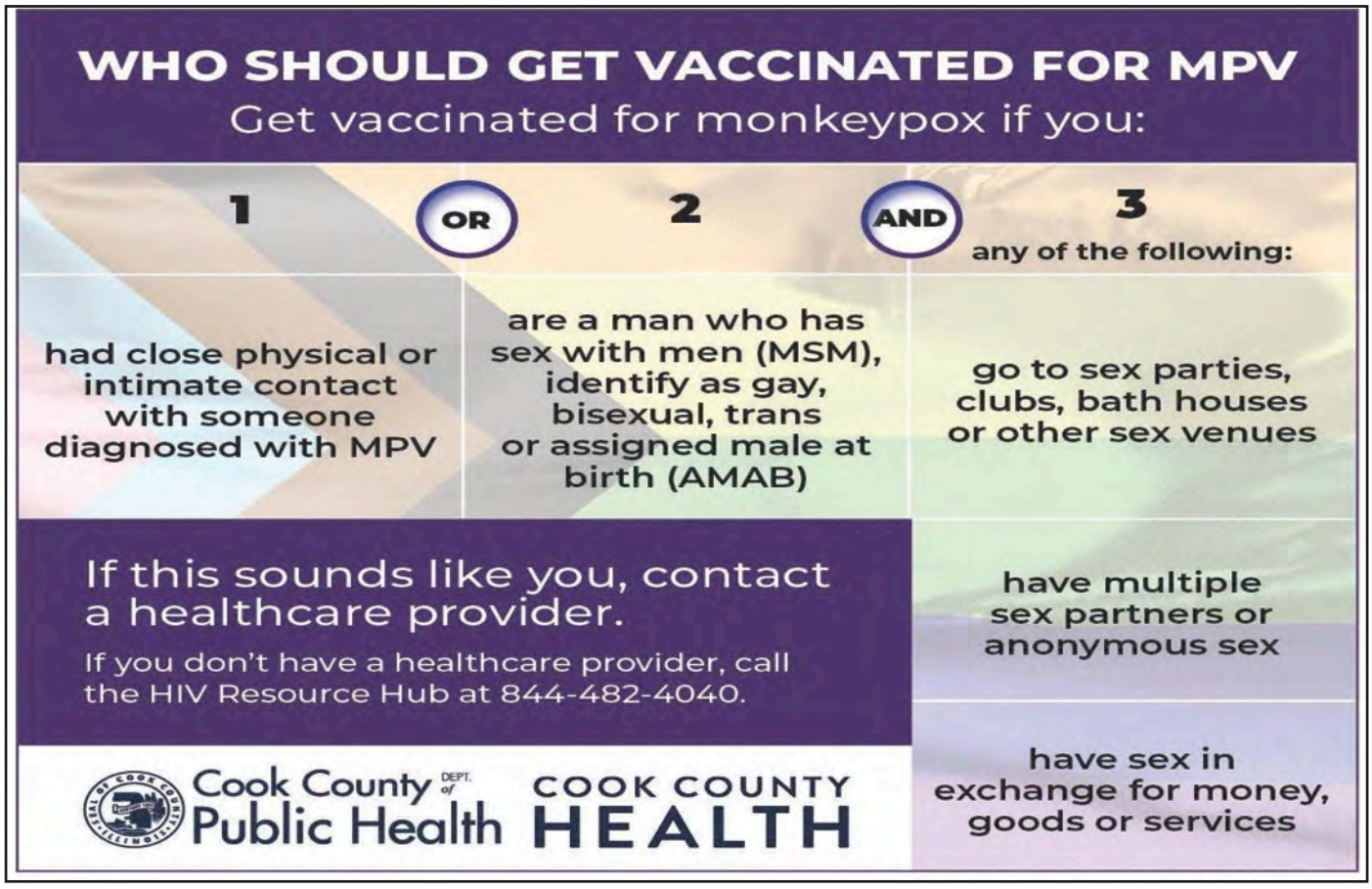
DD: It's one of the big things my husband and I share together. We both love music. I've tried to learn that it's not good to watch MSNBC all day long and scream at the TV. Sometimes you just put on music and it relaxes you [laughs]. Music is the universal language. When I was growing up, my mom took me to everything. Every plane, every movie, to the opera, to dance. I love all kinds of music, I really do. I want to listen to it all. I have my certain favorites, but it's the universal language. Particularly country music, which speaks to the heart and the real basic bones of living. Music is a beautiful, magical thing.

GS: One of my favorite scenes involves Jan and Marie, a lesbian couple at the campsite who invite Faye over for dinner. Their conversation involves the possibility of a wedding. As Marie says, "It's legal now, you know? Like pot." Have you been to many same-sex weddings?

DD: That's Benja and Michelle (playing Jan and Marie), two beautiful actresses from New York. I got to see Michelle at the Tribeca Film Festival. I've been to a couple (of same-sex weddings). I work a lot with the LGBTQ director Del Shores in Los Angeles. He's written a lot of beautiful plays. I went to Del's first wedding, and I've been to another friend's wedding. I am completely supportive of that community. I grew up with gay friends. My parents had gay friends.

GS: Finally, Dale, are there any upcoming projects you'd like?

DD: Speaking of LGBTQ, the only thing I really have coming out is the new Amazon Prime series of "A League of Their Own." It's an expanded version of the true story, which included a lot of gay women at that time that had to hide their sexuality. They were forced to go through charm school and wear lipstick and wear makeup and wear short skirts, and they weren't allowed to wear pants. It also opens up the African-American side of the story. The young black girl who was this tremendous player but she can't play for the Peaches because she's black! It touches on some social aspects. It's an incredibly talented cast of young girls. I play their chaperone and I was really proud to be a part of it. I think it's going to be a great story.



GRAB KEVIN

Photo Courtesy of Peacock

Kevin at Camp Again

In 'They/Them,' the 'Footloose' actor's character has surprises in store for this camp's new queer recruits

By *Chris Azzopardi*

Kevin Bacon is back at camp. Not Camp Crystal Lake, where the 64-year-old actor met his gruesome demise in the original 1980 horror classic "Friday the 13th." But at the kind of camp that is a horrific reality for queer youth — conversion therapy camp. In "They/Them," Bacon, partly famous for being stalked by Jack on "Will & Grace," runs the Whistler Camp, a place sold to LGBTQ+ teens as welcoming and inclusive when just the opposite is true.

In openly gay writer-director John Logan's film, vulnerable queer recruits, led by non-binary actor Theo Germaine's Jordan, arrive both optimistic and skeptical to Whistler, under the impression they're seeking ultimate happiness. But when the pressure to conform is dialed up, that future prospect comes at the expense of their personhood.

Known for his roles in "Footloose," "A Few Good Men" and "Tremors" (some might say his best work was in "Wild Things"), Bacon took a few minutes to chat about the role and how the film challenges LGBTQ+ horror tropes.

Chris Azzopardi:When you look back at your career, who is scarier: Owen, Jason or the underground creepy-crawlies of "Tremors"?
Kevin Bacon:[Laughs.] This is how I would compare those: The Graboids [in "Tremors"] are actual monsters. Jason is technically a human being, but he seems to have evolved into having almost kind of supernatural power. But the scariest part about Owen is that he's a real man. He could be in your family.

CA:As the camp leader, you really tap into this sort of warmness that's very unsettling.

KB:That's something that John Logan and I talked about a lot. We didn't want to come right out of the gate and have the guy be a drill sergeant or kind of Bible-thumping or terrorizing people right away. We wanted to bring everybody in in a gentle and warm sort of embrace, you know? And that left us a place to go so that when the anger and the fear and the manipulation and the darkness of Owen's character come through, it comes as a little bit more of a surprise and becomes more chilling in that way.

CA:You really embody that. For someone who's long been an LGBTQ + ally, what was the appeal of doing a movie set at a conversion therapy camp, given the actual horror of that process?
KB: You know, it's one thing to make a movie about very important issues. But sometimes you can make small dramas about these things and you're gonna be preaching to the converted because they're not gonna have any kind of widespread appeal. Whereas if you can take, as John so brilliantly did, this horrible notion and package it in a film that has the possibility of widespread viewing, then there's something

Photo Courtesy of Peacock

beautifully Trojan horse subversive in the messaging.

I think what John really wanted was for young people on the fringes who are feeling bullied or are closeted or living in some part of the country where who they are is completely unaccepted, to be able to see themselves up on that screen and feel a sense of identity. But the best outcome would be someone who thinks in the same way that Owen thinks or that Carrie Preston's character thinks and sees this and questions this very notion of conversion. They'll think, "Oh, well, wait a second. This is just not right."

CA:Have you known people like Carrie Preston's character or an Owen and had to have a conversation about why conversion therapy is not the right route for a queer child?

KB:I can't say that I have. I also have a feeling that if they did feel that way that they probably wouldn't bring it up with me. But also, maybe that just speaks to kind of [this] rarefied bubble of an existence that I live in.

CA:How do you think the film represents the trans community in a different light, as opposed to the typical way they're portrayed in horror films — as victims or villains?

KB:Horror can be different genres, as you know. There's psychological horror and there's slasher movies. There's monster movies, zombie movies, ones with vampires. You know, there's different kinds of worlds. In the slasher world, the tradition was to take things that society had deemed morally wrong such as drug use, premarital sexuality, homosexuality, goofiness, race, obesity, anything, and kill those people. People seemed to agree that that was a good idea. And so this movie is definitely flipping that notion.

I think that horror in general — "Get Out" being one of the great examples of this — is having a little bit more of a pointed view. As far as I'm concerned, it can just be… somebody in a closet with a knife, if it's done well. But I do think that ["They/Them"] has more of a pointed view. And I can tell you that [during] the first scene that we shot in the movie, me walking out on that porch and looking at those people, I was really trying to stay in the headspace of the character. I have to say that I felt a tremendous amount of pride with the fact that these young people were standing there in front of me, and brought together in this film by John Logan and Blumhouse in order to be genuine representations of all different kinds of people that make up this society.

CA:When in your career do you first remember being aware that you had an LGBTQ+ fanbase?

KB:I honestly… I'm so happy to hear that. That never even crosses my mind. Great. That's cool. Maybe I became aware just now, in this moment. [Laughs.]

CA:No way. Not the guy who did "Wild Things." There's no way that there weren't gay men coming up to you on the streets and acknowledging that role.

KB: [Laughs.] Well, you know, "Wild Things" was crazy because I didn't

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Photos By Anthony Meade

even really think about the fact that male nudity would get so much attention. It was something that I... I don't know. I mean, it's just naïve of me, but it didn't even cross my mind that it was gonna become what it became. But it was great, and I like to be acknowledged in any kind of way, so thank you for that.

Photo Courtesy of Peacock

Chris Azzopardi is the Editorial Director of Pride Source Media Group and Q Syndicate, the national LGBTQ+ wire service. He has interviewed a multitude of superstars, including Cher, Meryl Streep, Mariah Carey and Beyoncé. His work has also appeared in The New York Times, Vanity Fair, GQ and Billboard. Reach him via Twitter @chrisazzopardi.

American dreamer:
An interview with App Kid author Michael Sayman

By Gregg Shapiro

Photo By Brian Smith

Now available in paperback, *App Kid: How a Child of Immigrants Grabbed a Piece of the American Dream* (Vintage, 2022/2021) the memoir by young, groundbreaking, queer tech wizard Michael Sayman is the kind of book that has something for almost everyone. As it says in the title, Sayman, and his sister, are the children of immigrants – Peruvian mother and Bolivian father – who settled in Miami. The "American dream" Sayman "grabbed" is a healthy slice of the internet, first as an independent app developer and later in the employ of Facebook and Google. Additionally, App Kid is a coming out story that provides a fresh perspective on the experience. Michael was generous enough to make time for an interview in advance of the publication of his memoir.

Gregg Shapiro: Michael, why was now the right time to write your memoir *App Kid*?
Michael Sayman: Honestly, I never timed this intentionally so much as I feel (like) I ended up kind of realizing the timeliness of a book like this as the launch date was approaching. I know it sounds a little crazy, but to me it was something where…I'll give you an example of this; my book and my experiences as a child working on these apps was very isolating at times. I spent a lot of time as a kid on my computer at home, kind of interacting with the world through the Internet, which was something I chose to do at the time. But as we started seeing with the pandemic, which none of us could have really predicted, we now see so many other kids out there being forced into an environment that is very similar to the one that I grew up in.
GS: A forced isolation.

MS: Yes. It's much more in mind now. It was not in mind when this (writing of the book) process was coming together. It's been about two and a half to three years since I started on the book.

GS: Even though you couldn't have foreseen the pandemic, did you have a target audience in mind while you were writing the book?
MS: Yes, definitely. There's a bunch of different aspects to this book that I think relate to different people and different audiences. For example, I think a lot of parents with children spending all their time on these iPads and their iPhones and not really knowing how you handle a kid who spends their whole life on that. I think a lot of parents will read this and think, "There is potential in the Internet, but there's also challenges that I'm sure other parents can relate to in terms of how to deal with children who are in that space." The other is obviously the kid who is coding and who's trying to make a name for himself on the Internet. We've seen over the past few years that the number one job that kids want to be now is no longer astronaut or doctor. They want to become Internet famous. Influencers, YouTubers, developers. It's an entirely new landscape and I think there's a lot of kids out there who grow up seeped in this entire Internet culture. Some of them feel like they're alone out there. They feel similar in that regard where they just get on their computer and don't really know where to go and how to be guided. Especially in a world where the technology is advancing so fast that our own parents did not grow up with 90% of the tools at our disposal. It's really hard to find examples of other people in the world who have gone through what the kids are going through today because of how quickly things are moving.

GS: It's interesting that you mentioned that readership demographic because the tone of the book, including the use of what I would describe as clean language, made me wonder if you had a younger readership in mind as you were writing it?
MS: No. It's funny, the way that I talk tends to be a little bit cleaner, sometimes. What's funny is that when I was growing up, and I've realized this more recently, I was almost like the kid who would punish himself when I did something wrong. Or try to control the way that I did things.

GS: That definitely comes through in the book.
MS: Yes. I'll give you an example. When I was a kid, instead of trying to sneak away and drink alcohol without

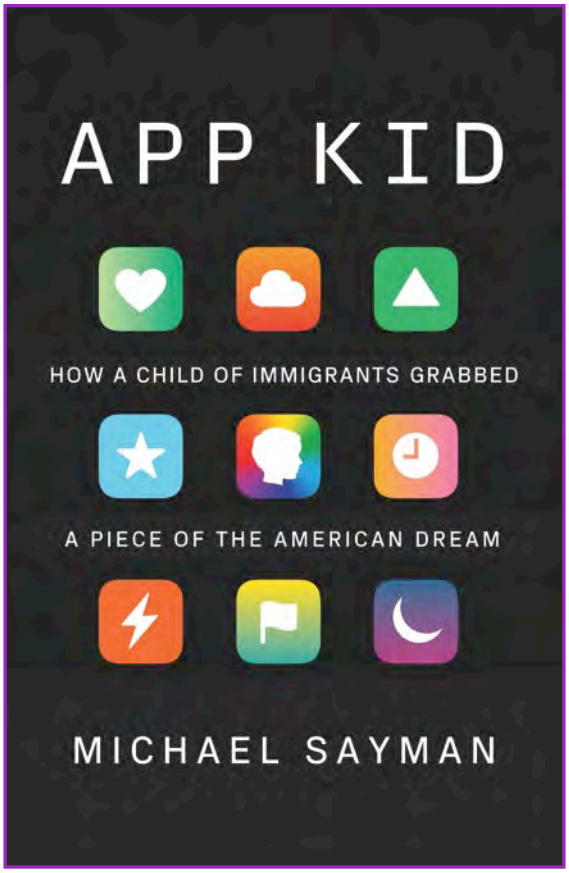
telling my parents, “Hey, don't drink!” or silly things like that. I would tell my friends, “Oh no, we shouldn’t be drinking yet. It’s going to affect our brain development [laughs].” Most kids aren’t going to react that way [laughs].

GS: Because of the considerable role your family plays in App Kid, do you know if they’ve read the book and, if so, what do they think of it?

MS: They’ve definitely read the book. They've been along the entire process. They've been in the loop on you how I've been writing it. My thoughts, as well, as I was writing the book have obviously evolved over time, too. It's one of those things that have been really challenging for us as a family. The family dynamic that we had is not normal, and I guess that's partly why there's a book about this. But in terms of the way that we've approached it together, and the way that we’ve thought about this is that there's a lot to the dynamic that took place in that time and there's a lot to the perspective that I had as a kid in terms of the relationship with the parents and how whatever they or my family was doing, how I would interpret it. Being able to share the truth of that perspective from where I was as a kid. Not only doing it for the sake of trying to be accurate with that, but also for the sake of other kids out there who might be able to relate to those types of pains, frustrations, and challenges. The idea being that, and I think as a family we think about this, how do we make sure that if there's anyone else who comes across a situation like this, that they can all learn a little bit from this, and maybe have a better dynamic and situation come out of it. For all of us, we've learned a lot through the entire process of this career, how it ended up happening. But at the same time, it's been a challenge, I'm not going to lie. It hasn't been easy.

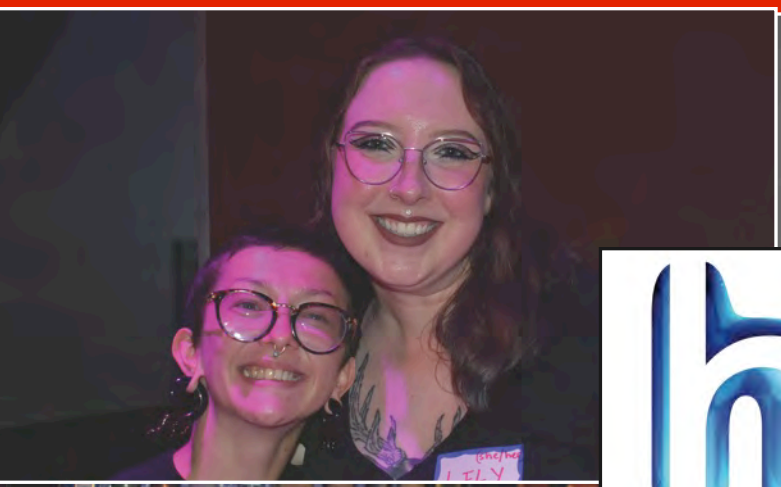
GS: App Kid also reads like a kind of instruction manual for people of all ages who may have an interest in doing the kind of work that you do. Do you also see it that way and was that intentional on your part?

MS: Yes. I think there are parts of it where it certainly felt that way. I do think that was also the case. I think a lot of it tends to be my personality just coming out. A lot of times, when I talk about anything regarding app development or the tech industry as a whole, I will kind of turn into this mini professor [laughs]. Start dictating how I feel things can go. I also kind of felt like there was some intentionality behind when I talked to the readers about certain steps. Being very clear about these are the set of things that I've learned over the years have worked and these are the set of things that haven't. Here's how you can go about doing that. Being intentional about that for sure. It’s a combination of these things in the book. You have the story, which is exciting and crazy and weird. But you also have a lot to take in from an experienced app developer. It's one of those weird things where you can combine both and it somehow works well [laughs].



GS: It does! Your coming out process is also a significant part of the book. From arriving at “the conclusion that my interest in guys wasn’t just a passing thing” to your mother’s moment of acceptance in which she demonstrated how far she’d come following her insensitivity in an earlier chapter. What was it like to put your coming out into your own words?

MS: People sometimes question whether or not we should be identifying or putting too much of an emphasis on our sexual orientations as part of who we are. For me, I almost grew up with this idea that if I am actually gay, it should not be who I am. It should not be anything related to who I am. It shouldn’t shape me in any way. But as I started to understand it more, as I started to understand myself more, and my sexual orientation and how it made me think about the world and what else tended to come along with that, I realized that it was not just about sexual orientation. Not only was it not just that; it was impacting every other decision that I made in my life. How I behave around other people. How I would become very observant. How I was so shy in school. How those types of actions ended up affecting how I even developed certain skills led me to realize that this is not just about sexual orientation, this is about the entire trajectory of my life, personal and career-wise. I realized that it shaped my brain, it shaped how I think about the world, for better or worse. As I started to realize that, I thought that it's important in this book to talk about that. It's important to talk about how that affected me. I think you can get hints in the beginning of the book, as well, from when I'm in school and I don't really talk to the other kids. Then I convinced myself that the only reason I am not going out with girls is because I felt overweight. I felt like if I just went to the gym I would be able to go out with girls. All of these feelings that you have growing up, that you then realize part of why I even became successful in app development is due to so many of these effects that this part of me had. My upbringing and my environment. No matter the challenges. I see it that way. For me, it was very important to be able to talk about that. Especially because I think it was one of the most impactful aspects of me that really defined the rest of my life. It's one of those things that, in the beginning [laughs], I was like, “Oh, no, no, no. This can't be. This is just going to be a little tiny aspect of me. I'm never going to talk about it [laughs].” But it’s silly now that I think about it. As I've gotten older, I’ve come to understand it a lot more. Especially through the



hydrate

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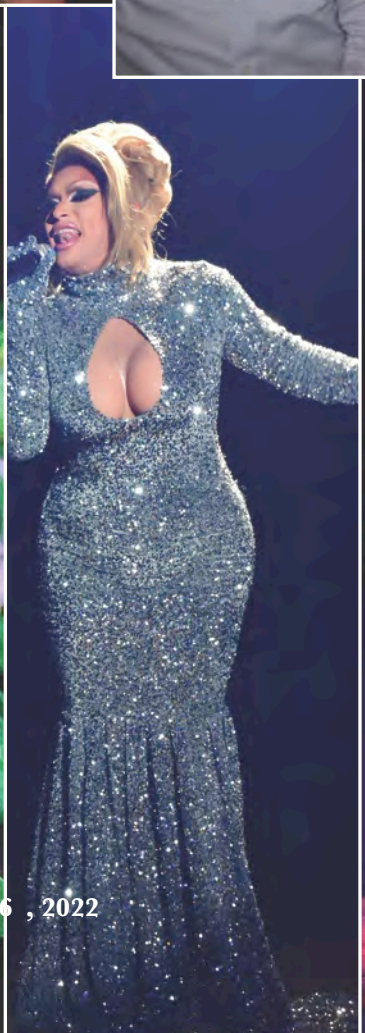
Anthony Meade



perspective of those who came in generations before me, who came out and the troubles they went through, not only the troubles but also how much it really does shape your life. How it's not just about you know your sexual orientation in one moment or another.

GS: It's also nice to hear someone from your generation having respect and appreciation for those that came before. You wrote about going to Disney World with your family and your ex-boyfriend William, and it made me wonder if you'd ever been to the park for Gay Days?

MS: I have never been. I realized a year after starting to date my ex that they had those. I was like, "OK, we've got to figure out a time to go." I didn't know that they had them and I've yet to actually go, so hopefully I'll be able to do that. After the pandemic hit, it got a lot harder to figure out when to go. But I'm definitely adding that to my list. I will say part of the reason why I ended up going to Disney World so much later on, too, was because during my childhood, as I was struggling with the payments and the house and the whole recession that had hit our family, the one nice thing that I had from the before times was going as a family to Disney World. That stayed with me as this happy place of mine into my adulthood.

GS: You currently divide your time between Miami and the San Francisco-area. How do you think the LGBTQ+ communities in these regions compare?

MS: That's a really interesting question. First of all, they're completely different. I would say San Francisco, in many ways, is extremely open and accepting to the point where if you tell somebody that you're gay they're like, "Oh, OK, I guess. Why are you telling me? Who cares?" [Laughs] that's kind of the attitude over there. If anything, I think you've got to come out as straight in some parts of San Francisco [laughs]. It's an interesting situation in San Francisco. I felt really privileged to be able to live in that part of the country during those years where I started discovering myself. In terms of Miami, I feel like Miami is rapidly changing in this (regard). It wasn't always like this. I know when I was growing up in Miami, in high school, especially in 2012, 2013, it was very much not accepted especially in the community that I was around, the Hispanic community. It's something that we're slowly kind of growing and learning and changing up over time. The stereotypes are very much there. I remember I came from California once to Miami and I had my hair bleached, yeah because everyone's got to try that at one point [laughs], and everyone in Miami thought it was a gay thing. You didn't have that in San Francisco. If a guy wore an earring, that was a gay thing. Now times are changing. Now it's completely different. Now it's really cool for guys to wear earrings, and everyone does it. They bleach their hair and they do all this stuff. That's happening in Miami, too, but I think the Hispanic culture of Miami has made it very different from San Francisco when it comes to LGBT acceptance and just the ability for people to feel comfortable being who they are.

GS: If there was a movie version made of App Kid, who would you like to see portraying you?

MS: [Laughs] that's a good question! I don't know. I have been thinking about that a bit as there have been some discussions around a movie for the book. I'm not entirely sure who, but there's a number of people. In my mind, I think it's hard to cast because it takes place when I was a kid. I've got to think, "Is there any [laughs] slightly nerdy, dorky Latino kid out there who [laughs] kind of looks like me, has this uncomfortable look on their face all the time and is constantly shifting their eyes all around as they're thinking. I don't know of any actors like that. But if they do find someone like that and they do that, I would expect it to be some type of a tragic-comedy movie. Larry David as my dad and Sofia Vergara as my mom [laughs].

GS: Do you foresee writing another memoir in the future to bring readers up to date on what happened in your life in the years following the publication of *App Kid*?

MS: I think it really depends on what happens next, to be honest. If there is something interesting out there and people want to know what comes next, I am certainly open to the idea of picking up another version of this and doing the "what happens next" version of the book. But until then, I don't know. I think a lot of things are to come and I'm excited to see what comes next. I'm still just as weird as I've always been, so I'm pretty sure I'll get myself into all kinds of terrible situations, but as long as that stuff keeps happening and people are interested, I'm certainly not opposed to doing it.

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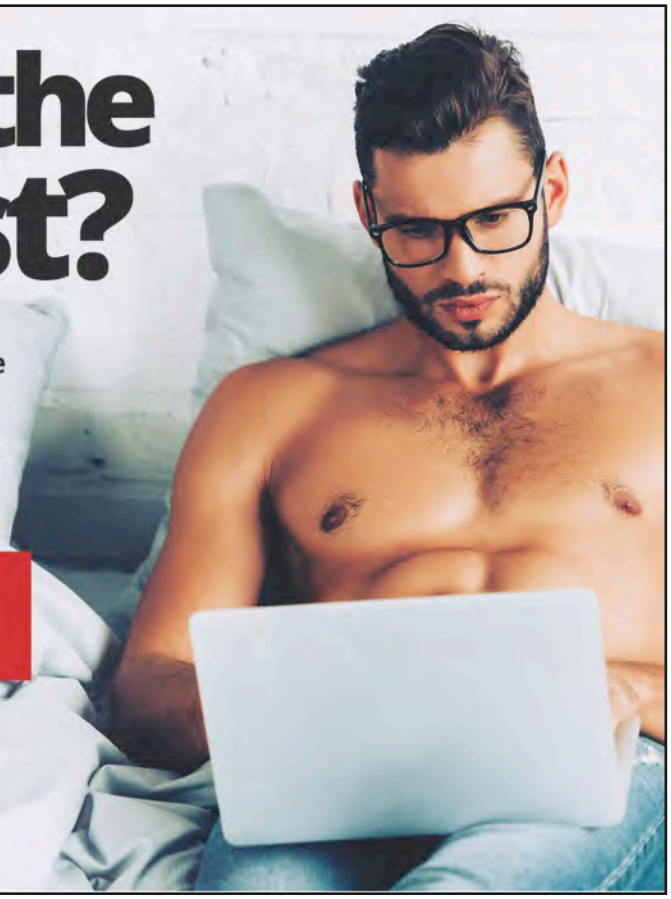

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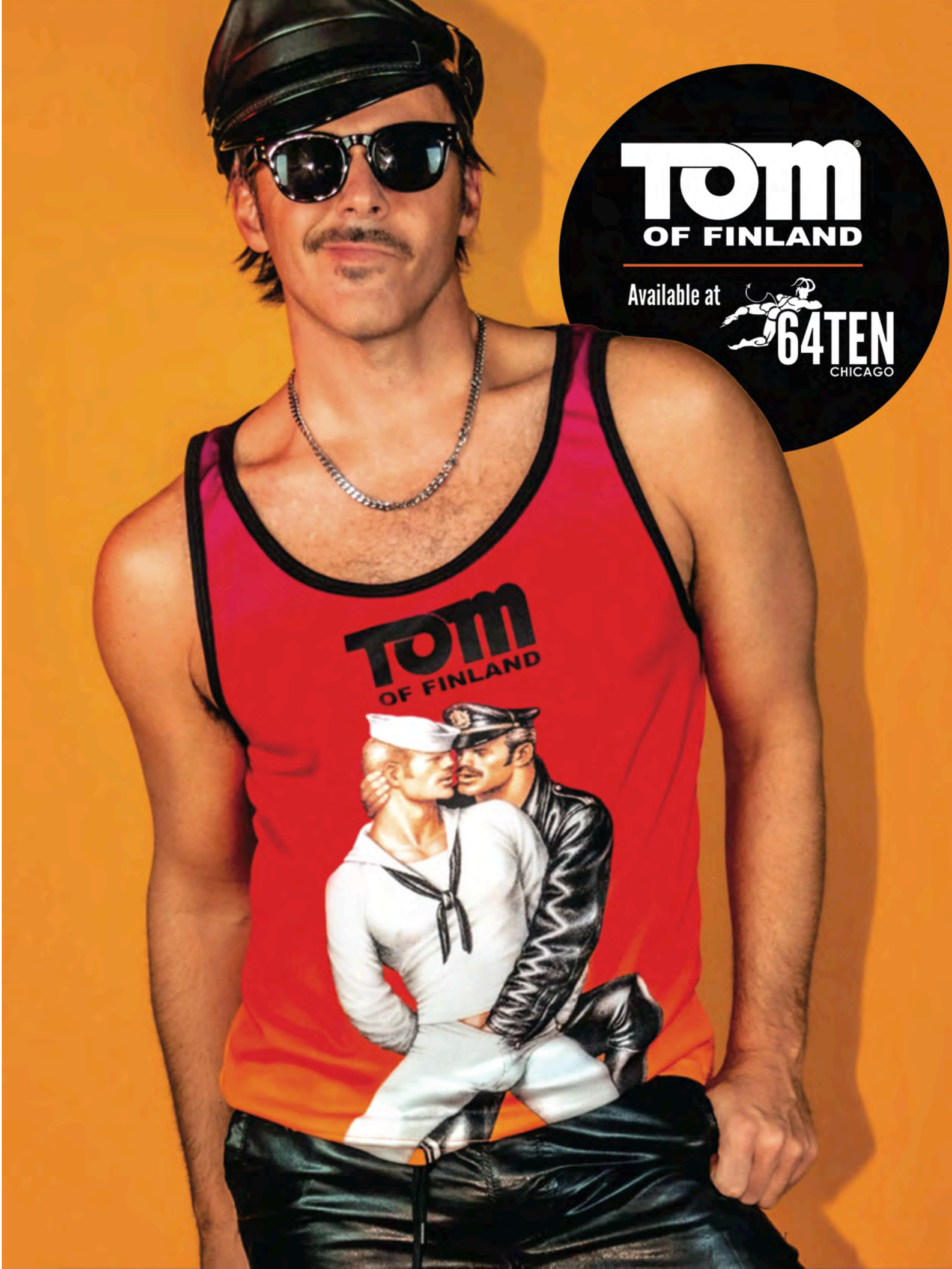
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Daily Specials

Monday	**2 Bears Tavern Uptown:** . $5 Jager, Fireball & Malort $4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's), $4StoliCocktails (Any Flavor). **@mosphere:** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm. **Cell Block:** Open 4pm-2am. **Charlies:** Bingo 7 – 11 pm Dancing until close**. Hydrate:** Lips and Mascara Doors at 8pm Show at 10pm. **Lark:** Happy Hour 5-7pm, Bottles of Wine 50% off with dinner entree purchase. **Lucky Horseshoe:** Open at 4pm, Dancers 8pm. **Meeting House Tavern:** $5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tallboy Beers. **North End:** Open at 11am, $5 Well Drinks. **Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview:** Open 2pm-2am, $5 Drafts & Cans, $6 Stoli Vodka Cocktails, $7 Glasses of Wine, $8 Larceny Old Fashioneds, $5 Bud Lights 4-6pm. **Sidetrack:** Open at 3pm, Musical Monday Show Tunes 8pm-2am. **Steamworks:** Every 3rd Monday TM4M (Trans Men For Men) 8pm-2am. **The Sofo Tap:** $4 Whiskey, Rye& Bourbon $3 Miller Lit Drafts $5Big Ass Long Islands, $4 Tallboys,5Jager, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR,Hamm's)Free Darts. **Touche:** Euchre Night, Come out and Play 7-10pm Sports on our screens Club room Open!.
Tuesday	**2 Bears Tavern Uptown:** . $5 Jager, Fireball & Malort $4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's), $6 Big Miller Lite Drafts $3 House Shots. **@mosphere:** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, Game Night with Tony. **Cell Block:** Open 4pm-2am. **Charlie's:** TuneUp Tuesday Karaoke 7 – 11PM, Tag Team Tuesdays 11p – 2am, Dancing until close. **Houndstooth:** $2 Tacos, ½ Off Bottles of Wine, $5 Red or White Sangria, $5 Chambongs, $3 Fireball, $22 Bud Light Seltzer Buckets, $22 Mexican Beer Buckets. **Hydrate:** 8/10 TatTuesday XXL Doors open at 8pm. **Kit Kat Lounge:** Happy Hour 5-7pm $8.95 Martinis **Lark:** 50% Off Bottles of Wine with any Entree Purchase, Bud Light $5, Select Wine $5, Well Cocktails $6 5-7pm 50%off Bottles of Wine with purchase of an Entree. **Lucky Horseshoe:** Open at 6pm. Dancers at 8pm. Open auditions for male dancers 7pm. $5 drink specials. **Meeting House Tavern:** $6 Big Miller Lite Drafts, $3 House Shots, $5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tallboy Beers. **North End:** Open at 11am, $5 Canned Beers, Seltzers & Ciders. **Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview:** Open 2pm-2am, $5 Drafts & Cans, $6 Stoli Vodka Cocktails, $7 Glasses of Wine, $8 Larceny Old Fashioneds, $5 Bud Lights 4-6pm. **Sidetrack:** Open at 3pm, Trivia Tuesday 8-10pm, TRL Tuesday: Totally Rad Line-up of 90's-to-Now Music Videos 10pm-2am, OUTspoken LGBTQ+ Storytelling 1st Tuesday of the month from 7-9pm. **Steamworks:** Every Tuesday 4 pm – 4 am Guys Under 25 Get In Free* (*Free 30 day membership and free locker). **The Sofo Tap:** $4 Premium Well Cocktails, $4 Tallboys,5Jager, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR,Hamm's)Free Darts.**Touche:** Hardcore Cruisin' Sponsored by Leather64Ten No Cell Phones/Wifi
Wednesday	**2 Bears Tavern Uptown:** $5 Jager, Fireball & Malort $4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's),.$4 Premium Well Cocktails. **@mosphere:** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm. **Cell Block:** Open 4pm-2am. **Charlie's:** Country Line Dancing 7 – 10pm, Sapphire's Secret Shadows 10pm – 1 am, Dancing until close.**Kit Kat Lounge:** Happy Hour 5-7pm $8.95 Martinis **Lark:** Free Bingo, 50% Off Nachos & Totchos, $8 Villa One Margaritas Frozen or on the Rocks, Traditional Flavor only. Bud Light $5, Select Wine $5, Well Cocktails $6 5-7pm.**Lark:** Happy Hour5-7pm $4 Dud Light Drafts $6 Well Cocktails. Buy One Pizza Get one half offDie In Only**Lucky Horseshoe:** Open at 6pm Dancers at 8pm. $5 drink specials. **Meeting House Tavern:** $3 Miller Lite Drafts, $4 Stolis (All Flavors), $5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tallboy Beers. **North End:** Open at 11am $5 Lagunitas Draft & Cans. **Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview:** Open 2pm-2am, $5 Drafts & Cans, $6 Stoli Vodka Cocktails, $7 Glasses of Wine, $8 Larceny Old Fashioneds, $5 Bud Lights 4-6pm **Sidetrack:** Open at 3pm, All Things Taylor & Ariana 1st Wed of month, All Things Beyoncé 2nd Wed of month, All Things Gaga 3rd Wed of month, FUN DMC: Dua/Megan/Cardi last Wed of month: all 9pm-2am. **Steamworks:** Bear Hump Every second Wednesday 6-9pm A monthly mid-week gathering of Furry Men. **The Sofo Tap:** $3 House Shots, $4 Titos Coctails,$6Big Miller Lite Drafts. $5Jager, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR,Hamm's)Free Darts. **Touche:**Jockstrap Night Sponsored by Full Kit GearFree Clothing Check.
Thursday	**2 Bears Tavern Uptown:** $5 Jager, Fireball & Malort $4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Whiskey, Rye & Bourbon.**@mosphere:** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, RuPaul Drag Race All Stars 6 Viewing Party - 7pm. **Charlie's:** Survivor 10 pm – 1 am, Dancing Until Close. **Hydrate:** 5/26 Skin Trade Grabby Opening Party Doors open at 9pm brnefit for TPAN.. **Kit Kat Lounge:** Happy Hour 5-7pm $8.95 Martinis. **Lark:** Happy Hour5-7pm $4 Dud Light Drafts $6 Well Cocktails . 7pm Extreme Bingwith Vian Dejour. 50%off Nachos or Tatchos $8 Villa One Margaritas Frozen or on the Rocks Tradional Flavor Only.**Lucky Horseshoe:** Open at 6pm. Dancers at 8pm. $5 drink specials. **Meeting House Tavern:** $5 You Call It's, $5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tallboy Beers. **North End:** Open at 11am, $5 Deep Eddy Cocktails **Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview:** Open 2pm-2am, $5 Drafts & Cans, $6 Stoli Vodka Cocktails, $7 Glasses of Wine, $8 Larceny Old Fashioneds, $5 Bud Lights 4-6pm **Sidetrack:** Open at 3pm, Let's Go Thursdays with Alex Kay & Friends 9pm-2am. **Steamworks:** Lights Out Thursdays, The Club goes Dark Every Thursday 4pm-4am. **The Sofo Tap:** $4 Premium Well Cocktails$4 TallBoys, $5Jager, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR,Hamm's)Free Darts. **Touche:** Throwback Thursdays70's& 80's Music & Porn by BijouVideo.

GRAB YOUR FRIENDS

Friday	**2 Bears Tavern Uptown:** . $5 Jager, Fireball & Malort $4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's), $7 Big Miller Lite Drafts$3 House Shots.**@mosphere:** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, Dancers 10pm-1am. **Baton Show Lounge:** Doors open at 6pm, Shows at 7:30pm, 9:30pm & 11:30pm. **Cell Block:** Open 4pm-2am. **Charlie's:** 1st and 3rd Fierce Fridays 10p – 1am, 2nd Fierce Fridays - Traffic Light Party 10p – 1am, 4th Fierce Fridays - Glow Up Party 10p – 1am, 5th Fierce Fridays – Strut 10p – 1am, Dancing until close. **GRABBYS:** Gay Porn Awards Show6pm at Metro Theater. 7pm show starts Tickets Available at the door or onl;ine grabbyAwards.com,**Hydrate:**Fresh Faces A New Drag Competition Second and Forth Friday of the Month. **Kit Kat Lounge:** Happy Hour 5-7pm $8.95 Martinis. **Lark:** Happy Hour5-7pm $4 Dud Light Drafts $6 Well Cocktails .Every Friday from **Meeting House Tavern:** $5 Tito's, $7 Big Miller Lite Drafts, $5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tallboy Beers. **North End:** Open at 11am, $3 Miller Lite Drafts 4-7pm. **Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview:** Weekend Buckets $25 All Day, Miller Lite, Corona Extra, Truly Punch Variety, Truly Wild Berry Seltzer, Freshie Tequila Seltzer (5 Cans per Bucket - Cannot mix and match.) **Shakers:** $4 Domestic Bottles $5 Well Mixed Drinks, $10 Giant 23oz Long Islands in 22 flavors. **Sidetrack:** Open at 3pm, TGIF Show Tunes 3-7pm, RuPaul's Drag Race All Stars Viewing Party 7-9pm, Friday Night Dance Party 9pm-2am.**The Sofo Tap:** $7 Big Miller LiteDrafts $3 HouseShots. $5Jager, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR,Hamm's)Free Darts.**Touche:** 8/19 Cowboy RoundUp Cowboy Eye for the Leather Guy contest, 8/26 ONYXCLUB NIGHT
Saturday	**2 Bears Tavern Uptown:** . $5 Jager, Fireball & Malort $4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Lagunitas IPADrafts $5 Premium Well Cocktails$12 mimosa Carafes. **@mosphere:** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 3pm-5pm, Dancers 10pm -1am. **Baton Show Lounge:** Doors open at 6pm, Shows at 7:30pm, 9:30pm & 11:30pm. **Cell Block:** Open 2pm-3am. **Charlie's:** Country Line Dancing 7 – 10pm, The Main Event 10pm – 1am Dancing until Close. **Lark:** Lakeviews #1 Free flowing Brunch11am-3pm **Lucky Horseshoe:** Open with dancers at 3pm. $5 drink specials. **Meeting House Tavern:** $5 Signature Margaritas, $5 Premium Well Cocktails, $12 Mimosa Carafes, $5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tallboy Beers. **North End:** Open at 11am, $3 Miller Lite Drafts 11am-2pm. **Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview:** $10 Champagne Bottles, $5 Juice Kits, $3 Bud Lights 12-2pm, Weekend Buckets $25 All Day, Miller Lite, Corona Extra, Truly Punch Variety, Truly Wild Berry Seltzer, Freshie Tequila Seltzer (5 Cans per Bucket - Cannot mix and match.). **Sidetrack:** Open at 1pm, SaturGay Drag & Games with Zamora Love & Friends 3-6pm, Saturday Night Dance Party 9pm-3am, Dog Day 1st Saturday of the month 1-5pm. **The Sofo Tap:** $4 Lost Coast Tangerine Wheat $5 Signature Margaritas, $4 Tallboys, $5Jager, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR,Hamm's)Free Darts. **Touche:** 8/20 Gear Night with BLUF/Chicago barber & bootblack on duty dress code in Clubroom BNC 6pm. 8/27 RIPE PARTY, Dim Lights, Deep Beats, GoGo Dudes, DJ HarryT .
Sunday Funday	**2 Bears Tavern Uptown:** .$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort $4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Signature Margaritas $12 Mimosa Carafes.**@mosphere:** $6 Jack Products, $4 Domestic Draft, House Shots $2. **Baton Show Lounge:** Doors Open at 11am, Shows at 7:30pm, 9:30pm & 11:30pm. **Cell Block:** Open 2pm-2am **Charlie's:** Queeriod! Every other Sunday 5pm – 7pm, Singsational Sunday Karaoke 7pm – 11pm Mas Leche 11pm – 1am, Dancing until close. **Hydrate:** Doors open at 2pm Northalsted's Official after Brunch party. **Kit Kat Lounge:** Divalicious brunch with Madam X 11am-3pm, Happy Hour 4-7pm $8.95 Martinis . **Lark:** Lakeviews #1 Free flowing Brunch11am-3pm **Lucky Horseshoe:** Open with dancers at 3pm. $5 drink specials. **Meeting House Tavern:** $3 House Shots, $5 Premium Well Cocktails, $12 Mimosa Carafes, $5 Frozens, $5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tallboy Beers. **North End:** Open at 11am, $3 Miller Lite Drafts 7-10pm **Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview:** $10 Champagne Bottles, $5 Juice Kits, $3 Bud Lights 12-2pm, Weekend Buckets $25 All Day, Miller Lite, Corona Extra, Truly Punch Variety, Truly Wild Berry Seltzer, Freshie Tequila Seltzer (5 Cans per Bucket - Cannot mix and match.) **Sidetrack:** Open at 1pm, Sunday Funday Show Tunes 4-9pm, Sunday Funday After Dark Dance Party 9pm-2am **The Sofo Tap:** $7 Big MillerLite Drafts, $6 Chicago Handshake, $5 Prairie Vodka Cocktails, $5Jager, Fireball & Malort. $4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR,Hamm's)Free Darts.**Touche:** Beer Bust $2 Bud Light Drafts & Sodas Club Room Open 6pm Movie Night 7pm.

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	Artist	Title
1	Akon	Bananza (Belly Dancer) (DJ Shaan Remix)
2	Le Youth	Lighthouse ft. RBBTS
3	Fedde Le Grand & 22Bullets	Down
4	Mabel x Jax Jones x Galantis	Good Luck
5	Manuel Riva & Alexandra Stan	Heal Your Soul
6	Joel Corry x David Guetta x Bryson Tiller	What Would You Do
7	Drake	Massive
8	Cosmic Gate & Olivia Sebastianelli	We Got The Fire
9	Lucas & Steve x DubVision	Feel My Love ft. Joe Taylor (Festival Mix)
10	Shane Codd	Rather Be Alone
11	Aviella	Solo
12	TELYkast	Body To Body
13	Brooks ft. Isabel Usher	Someday
14	Andrew Bayer & Asbjorn	American Boy
15	DLMT	Say It (Radio Edit)
16	Showtek	Welcome Back Home ft. MC Ambush
17	Sigma	Here We Go Again
18	RIP Youth	It's A Vibe (R3HAB Remix) [Peloton Edit]
19	Siks & Henri PFR	Falling For You ft. Jordan Grace
20	Ted Bello & Robbie Rosen	Purpose
21	ARTY ft. Annie Schindel	Where Have You Been
22	Nitti Gritti ft. Hadar Adora	Sex Drive
23	Mika	Yo Yo (R3HAB Remix)
24	Steve Aoki & HRVY	Save Me
25	Fancy Inc	Be With You (with Dubdogz)
26	SAINt JHN	The Best Part Of Life (Imanbek Remix)
27	Jax Jones & Martin Solveig ft. GRACEY	Lonely Heart
28	Beyonce	Break My Soul
29	The Chainsmokers & Ship Wrek	The Fall
30	Benny Benassi & Anabel Englund	Lightwaves
31	Gryffin & OneRepublic	You Were Loved (Manse Remix)
32	Duke & Jones	Vertigo
33	Krewella	Drive Away (Finky's Clean RetroVision Radio Ed
34	Wilkinson & Becky Hill	Here For You
35	Robbie Mendez	Run
36	Emily Perry	Focused (Disco Fries Remix)
37	The Pressure	The Chills
38	Karen Harding	Other Side Of Love (Radio Edit)
39	Purple Disco Machine & Sophie and The Giants	In The Dark (Aeroplane Remix)
40	Mike Williams	Pretty Little Words ft. Zack Hall

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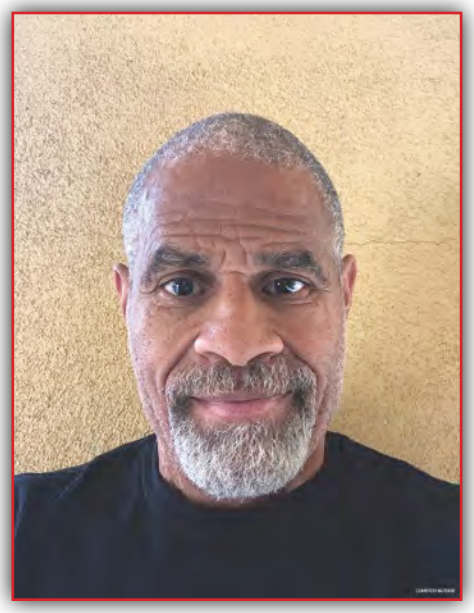
POSITIVE THOUGHTS

Transforming tragedy into triumph Dwayne Ratleff's 'Dancing to the Lyrics' details the HIV advocate and author's hardscrabble life as a child in 1960s Baltimore



By Neal Broverman

The Baltimore of Dwayne Ratleff's 1960s childhood was not like the one director John Waters parodied in "Pink Flamingos" and "Hairspray," or the dystopian wasteland depicted by HBO's "The Wire," or the hit song "Baltimore" from jazz icon Nina Simone. It was a flawed yet magical place, where horse-drawn carts sold fruit and vegetables, and paper boys sang while they hawked the day's news. It was a city that shaped the future author and longtime HIV survivor. Ratleff chronicled his chaotic early days in the memoir, "Dancing to the Lyrics," which received 2021's Best Indie Book Award in the LGBTQ+ Coming of Age category.

"Every time I read something about Baltimore, particularly the 1968 riots, the writers often have had the opinions of individuals sitting in a soft cushion a comfortable distance away from the events," Ratleff says. "I was very young, but I was in the city where it happened. My [complaining] would eventually turn into writing."

Ratleff, who moved with his family from Ohio to Baltimore, Maryland, when he was 5, says his childhood city possessed a strong community that existed alongside very real mid-century urban ills like racism, poverty and crime. Ratleff himself was dealing with a stepfather who systematically abused his mother, exposing him and his two sisters to regular explosions of violence. In "Dancing to the Lyrics," Ratleff describes how his troubled family life ran parallel to Baltimore's own problems — the city would be engulfed by deadly riots following the April 1968 murder of Martin Luther King, Jr.

As the cover of "Dancing to the Lyrics" depicts, Ratleff wasn't the most masculine child, but many elders accepted his femininity. He says it was mostly the church-going folk who chastised him for being different from other boys. Besides navigating homophobia and violence, Ratleff had another cross to bear — he was illiterate until his preteens. The fact that he learned to read at such a late age, only to bloom into an award-winning author, is not lost on Ratleff.

"There were many obstacles to writing this book," he says. "But the more obstacles in your path, the greater reason to start the journey. As I did not learn to read or write until I was 10 or 11, I never felt comfortable with my writing ability. In addition, I lost the partial use of my left hand in an accident and could no longer type. But the need to tell my story banished all those concerns and with one finger I began to type my story. Despite the award I won for my book, 'Dancing to the Lyrics,' the real reward was learning I was very good at something I always feared I was very bad at."

Ratleff hopes to follow up "Dancing to the Lyrics" with another book, possibly about his HIV diagnosis. Decades after having left Baltimore as an 11-year-old, Ratleff would test positive in early 1990, though he feels he actually seroconverted in 1982.

"The day I found out, I was very calm, not shocked at all," Ratleff recalls. "The full impact hit me a couple of days later. It was Super Bowl Sunday. All of the sudden I am walking on the streets of San Francisco, and I started to cry uncontrollably. The 49ers had just defeated the Denver Broncos to win the Super Bowl. While I was crying everyone was on the street celebrating, laughing and smiling. The juxtaposition could not be more surreal.

"Suddenly a car full of young straight men pulls up alongside me and yells at me, 'Yay 49ers!' One of them notices me crying and says, 'Leave him alone, he must be a Bronco's fan.' It was perhaps misguided sympathy, but it was sympathy nonetheless. It made me laugh briefly on a very dark day."

Ratleff credits both his proactive nature and simple happenstance for his longevity. Though he was told after his diagnosis he would likely die in less than five years, he would prove his doctors very wrong.

"Luck kept me alive long enough for advances in treatment to develop and for me to take charge of my health," he says

Now living in Palm Desert, California, with his husband and dog, Ratleff is taking time to recharge before starting his new book. As someone who's survived a violent upbringing and an HIV diagnosis when it was a death sentence, Ratleff offers this advice for others seeking similar resilience: "I feel fortunate that I have moved on from the many traumatic experiences in my life. It may not be as simple as it seems, but you must turn your worst enemy into your best friend. That person very often is yourself. You are only truly alone when you, too, abandon yourself. There is far more to it than that, but that is a crucial step."

Neal Broverman is the Editorial Director of Plus magazine. This column is a project of TheBody, Plus, Positively Aware, POZ and Q Syndicate, the LGBTQ+ wire service. Visit their websites – **http://thebody.com, http://hivplusmag.com, http://positivelyaware.com** and **http://poz.com** – for the latest updates on HIV/AIDS.

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GRAB HOLLY

It Takes A Donut Shop

By Holly Maholm

Once again, "Unicorn Magic" had its predictable effect upon the humans taking part in our little drama. Feeling suddenly fatigued, Mike, Dave and Doug stretched out in the straw and fell fast asleep. Phyllis and Lauren, likewise, were overcome with sleepiness, leaving only Dot and I (who had been shielded by Penelope from the effects of her magic) to do what was needed.

Dot and I got Phyllis and Lauren wrapped up in blankets and loaded into one of the delivery chariots, whereupon I drove that chariot to the back door of Donut Time. Coming in, I called upstairs to Grandma Lily to let her know it was us, after which I carried Phyllis up to her bed in her room.

As I went back downstairs to retrieve Lauren from the chariot, Dot took Grandma Lily aside and gave her a quick account of events leading up to this moment (leaving out the parts about "supernatural unicorns," "spectral avatars" and "the power of a unicorn's horn.") I put Lauren – still sleeping – into the spare bed in Grandma Lily's bedroom

This seemingly trivial event – by which Lauren was placed into the care of Grandma Lily – was destined to be pivotal for both Lauren and her child. You see, among all those persons connected in any way with Donut Time, Grandma Lily was undeniably the one having the deepest and widest experience with that most fundamental human endeavor known as "birthin' a baby."

Grandma Lily had not only birthed multiple of her own offspring, she had likewise been attendant upon the birthin' of multitudinous infants brought into this world by several of her sisters, sisters-in-law, nieces and (though she would never admit this – or describe it in these words) more than one "baby-mamma" of one of her brothers.

Accordingly, Dot and I were relieved to see that Lauren, fresh from her audience with the Unicorn Queen (of which she was all unaware), had (in anticipation of her future "delivery") been delivered into the care of Donut Time's reigning "Queen of All Childbirth." Grandma Lily promised to look after Phyllis and Lauren while they slept. Dot and I returned to the stable, where we reported to Queen Penelope on the success of the plan devised by the unicorns.

Next morning, I hurried to Donut Time to make myself useful to Phyllis and Grandma Lily as they labored to make Lauren comfortable. When I arrived, I found the three of them ensconced in a booth, where Lauren was hungrily wolfing down sausage-and-egg breakfast fritters. (She did so without shame, as all knew she was eating for two.) I greeted them and was about to slide into the booth when Lauren's mother – Mia – came in the door to Donut Time and – seeing her daughter – marched over and confronted those in the booth.

Mia glared at her daughter and spat out. "Where were you last night? It's not enough you're pregnant and unmarried… now you have to sleep around town, too?"

If I had had any doubts about the power of unicorn magic… its power to so transfigure the human heart as to eradicate any tendency to backslide or equivocate (once its mind is made up), that doubt was about to be dispelled. Lauren, despite being a young and vulnerable teenager, a person who had known no other home than the one her mother had provided for her, a child who – before her pregnancy – could not have imagined defying her mother, much less doing so in the words she now chose, replied.

"What I do with my life is my business, and you have nothing to say about it. If I want advice, I'll ask one of my friends – or maybe a complete stranger – not you. And since you're about to leave, let me save myself some time by informing you that I've decided to give birth to my baby and – if they're still willing – ask those two gay men (whose names you can't bring yourself to say) to raise that child as their own."

As Lauren spoke, the expression on Mia's face was transformed from shock and amazement to disbelief, and from incredulity to a contemptuous sneer. "You're not my daughter any more. I don't have a daughter! You can live in the gutter for all I care." She spun around and left.

Lauren watched her mother depart, then turning to meet the gaze of Phyllis and Grandma Lily, began to tear up, and had Grandma Lily not said what she said next, I believe Lauren would have begun to cry.

"I heard somebody once say, 'It takes a village to raise a child' and that may be true, but I can promise you this: If there's a Donut Time in that village, then you and your child will never miss a breakfast."

(To be continued)

Holly Maholm is a transgender woman living in Cleveland, Ohio. Look for Holly's new book Offered Magic: My Life Among the Unicorns (now available on Amazon) which collects the first 126 episodes of Holly's adventures involving both magical unicorns and her LGBTQ friends. Send a message to Holly at

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GRAB A PLANE

What's New in Washington, D.C.

By Bill Malcolm

There's always something new to do in Washington, D.C. since the museums change their exhibits frequently. At best of all, they are free. And you cannot beat the fall weather where summer lingers and winter does not arrive until December (and exits March 1). This time I stayed two nights at the fabulous Hotel Monaco, a luxury Kimpton property with lots of amenities: free bicycles, free happy hour (from 5 to 6 p.m.), artwork and statutes in your room, and great service. Beware of the resort fee on some rates, however. The Kimpton Hotel Monaco is in the old General Post Office which was completed in 1843. It has a marble façade and huge ceilings in the rooms. Their dining room, The Dirty Habit, is worth a visit. While I am a budget traveler, the Kimpton Hotel Monaco is worth every penny. Compass Coffee, a local favorite, is nearby.

WHAT TO DO

The Frontrunners meets many days including Saturdays and Tuesdays. You can run or walk. They meet at 23rd and P and then go up Rock Creek Park to the Zoo. Meeting times vary so check its website. I meet more people on a walk than I do all year in my home city. And afterwards the runners and walkers mingle over a bagel or coffee. Don't miss the Building Museum. It has a great exhibit on gun violence. Another exhibit chronicles the history of immigration along the Mexican Border.

Take a walk around the historic Logan Circle neighborhood.

Enjoy the many great restaurants along 14th Street NW. It's a millennial heaven with a lot of JFK wannabees. Everyone is D.C. seems to have a great job. It's a political junkies dream. And the gayest city in the country.

WHERE TO EAT

Jaloe by Jose Andres features great Spanish food. You will find them at 480 7th Street NW. Try the Flauta de Jam (ham sandwich) or the Gazpacho soup. The Futbl Club Barcelona is also excellent. Andres has several restaurants in the DMV that the locals rave over. (DMW=DC, Maryland, Virginia. It's one metro.)

Sweetgreens is my favorite. Try the fish taco salad; it is to die for. The nearby Pressed has great juices. (Try the beet carrot.) Both are across the street from Whole Foods just off 14th Street NW.

And Rasika has the best Indian street food in the country.

NIGHTLIFE

Don't miss the happy hour which runs until 8 p.m. at the Trade Bar on 14th NW. Or head over to Number 9 for the vodka specials until 7 p.m. Lots of eye candy at both and both feature outdoor seating. KCB Yonce (@KCbyonce) was hosting the viewing of *RuPaul's Drag Race* the Thursday night I was there. It's always a lot of fun. The Green Latern also has a happy hour until 8 p.m. as well as events like their popular Thursday night free drink event for the shirtless.

Check out these free Smithsonian Museum exhibits:

African American: Hip Hop

NORTHALSTED 40TH MARKET DAYS CHICAGO

Photos By
Anthony Meade

Photography

American History: A Latino History of the U.S.

Asian: Zen in Medieval Japan

American Indian: The Pacific Northwest and Preston Singletary (try the salmon in their café)

Portrait Gallery: Portraits of Remarkable Black Women (and of course, the Presidential Gallery)

Natural History: Outbreaks-Epidemics

National Building Museum: Mexican border exhibit and gun violence exhibit

WHERE TO STAY

In addition to two nights at the Hotel Monaco by Kimpton, an IHG property, I spent two nights at the Comfort Inn Downtown/Convention Center at 1201 13th Avenue NW. Just steps to the bars and restaurants in the 14th St NW/Logan Circle neighborhood, it is also a block from the Streets Market (1224 Massachusetts Avenue) store where you can grab great carry out. Best of all, it's your best hotel value in a city of over-priced hotels. And no resort fee! Book your stay at ChoiceHotels.com. I also like the Beacon Hotel and the Washington Plaza which are also near the Logan Circle neighborhood (and the bars). The Tabard Inn is also very nice.

GETTING TO DC, GETTING AROUND

I took United into Dulles, a major hub for them. (Download your credit card on their app so you can buy food and drinks on the flight.) While I have not been a fan of United, the flight and service were great. And you cannot beat the non stop options they offer into Dulles (IAD). I am rethinking my skepticism.

Then after a shuttle bus ride (the Silver Line Express bus which costs $5), I took the Silver Line Metro into town. (The Silver Line Metro will soon run to IAD but until then you have to take the shuttle.)

Going home, I took American Connection (operated by Republic) from the more convenient Reagan Airport (45 minutes from my hotel to the gate at DCA). They put me on an earlier flight at no charge and I was home in a jiffy.

So despite the tales of travel woes this summer, I had zero problems on all flights.

DC is very walkable. If you cannot walk there, take the Metro (subway), Metro bus, or the Connector (local bus). Get a Metro car. Under no circumstances, rent a car.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Read the ***Washington Blade*** in print or online or the *Metro Weekly* (online only). Both have carried my column or say they will.

The City Paper is their weekly while the *Washington Post* lists all the museum exhibits every Thursday.

Politico and *The Hill* are also must reads for political junkies like me.

D.C. never fails to amaze. It is so gay and always has been. The people are well educated and there is so much to do. Why I don't move there I am not sure. Plan you fall visit today.

*Bill Malcolm is the nation's only syndicated LGBTQ+ value travel writer. He received no compensation or freebies from anyone on his trip to Washington. This is his hobby. His opinions are his own. He works for a Washington, DC nonprofit as a teleworker based in Indianapolis. His column is carried by the _Seattle Gay News_, _PinkPlay Mag_ (Toronto), _GRAB Magazine_ and other publications. His column is also posted at IGLTA. Org (see travel blog), the international LGBTQ+ tourist business website (**www.iglta.org**).*

He focuses on value travel (local transit, biking or walking, eating where the locals do, taking transit and avoiding hotels that charge resort fees).

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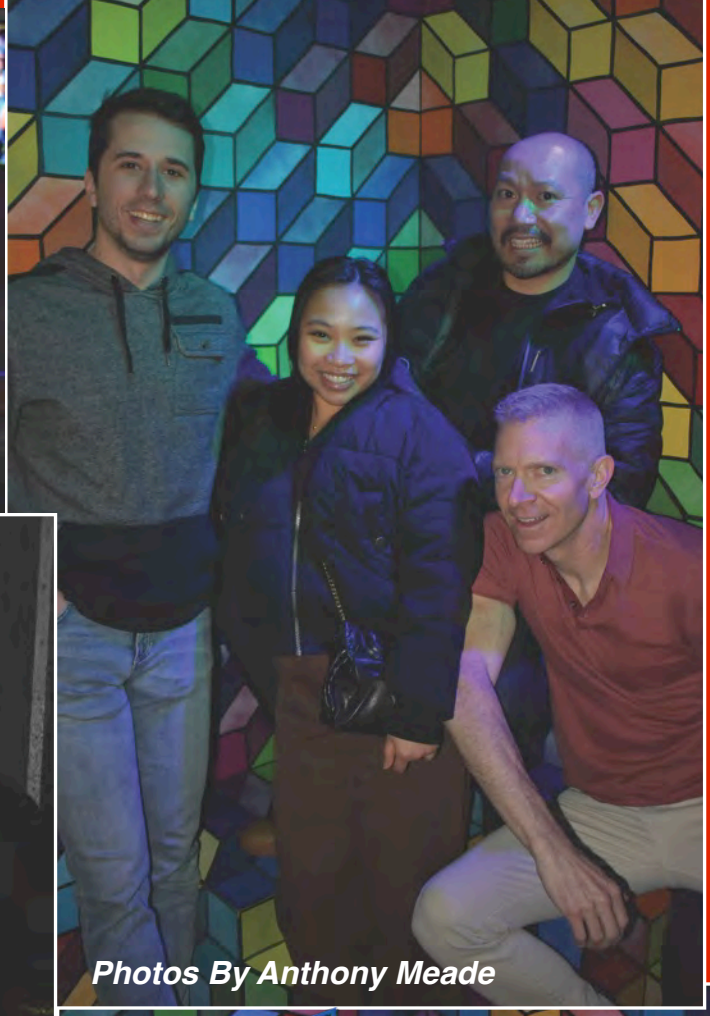

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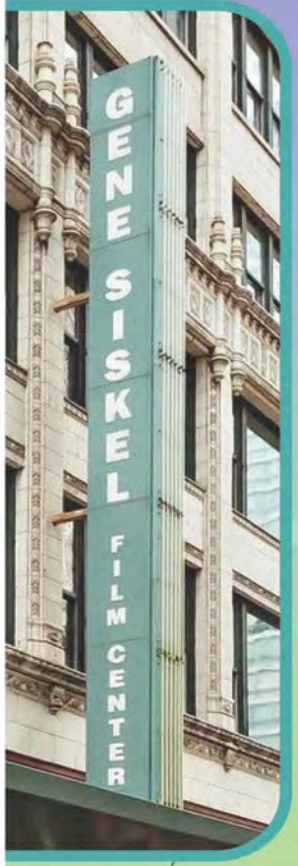

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AUG 17 & 21	THE TIMES OF HARVEY MILK 35MM
AUG 23 & 27	NITRATE KISSES 16MM
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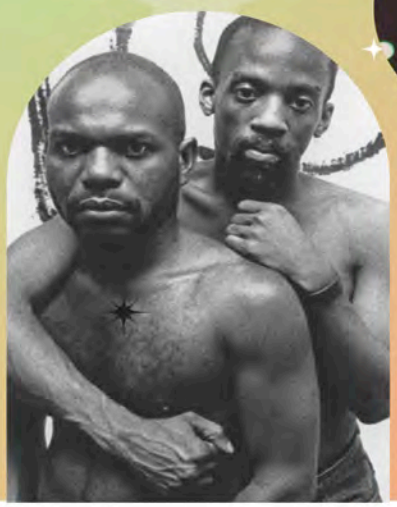

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KOKAKANDY PRODUCTIONS ANNOUNCES CASTING FOR SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET SEPTEMBER 8TH – November 6TH, 2022 AT THE CHOPIN THEATRE

Kokandy Productions has announced casting for its revival of***Stephen Sondheim'***s macabre masterpiece *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, playing September 8 – November 6, 2022 at The Chopin Theatre, 1543 W. Division St. in Chicago'sWicker Park neighborhood.The cast includes ***Kevin Webb*** and ***Caitlin Jackson*** as Sweeney Todd and Mrs. Lovett, partners incoiffed and culinary crime. They are joined by ***Laz Estrada*** (Adolfo Pirell), ***Isabel Cecilia*** **García** (Beggar Woman/Lucy Barker), ***Kelli Harringto***n (Judge Turpin), ***Josiah Haugen*** (Beadle Bamford), ***Chamaya Moody*** (Johanna), ***Patrick O'Keefe*** (Tobias Ragg) and ***Ryan Stajmiger*** (Anthony Hope). The Fleet Street ensemble includes ***Joel Arreol***a, ***Brittney Brown, Stephanie Chiodras, Christopher Johnson, Nikki Krzebiot, Charlie Mann, Daniel Rausch*** and ***Quinn Rigg***as Jonas Fogg. Swings include ***Tyler DeLoatch, Nathan Kabara*** and ***Angela Yu***.

Sweeney Todd has become a bloody, worldwide success since being awarded eight Tony Awards, including Best Musical for its Broadway premiere. An infamous tale, Sweeney Todd, an unjustly exiled barber, returns to nineteenth century London, seeking vengeance against the lecherous judge who framed him and ravaged his young wife. The road to revenge leads Todd to Mrs. Lovett, a resourceful proprietress of a failing pie shop. Mrs. Lovett's luck sharply shifts when Todd's thirst for blood inspiresthe integration of an ingredient into her meat pies that has the people of London hungry for more.

Stephen Sondheims and Hugh Wheeler's tasty, thrilling, theatrical treat has simultaneously shocked, awed and delighted audiences around the world.

Tickets are now on sale at ***bit.ly/SweeneyChicago.***

REFRACTED THEATRE COMPANY ANNOUNCES CASTING FOR WORLD PREMIERE OF ST. SEBASTIAN SEPTEMBER 15 – OCTOBER 2, 2022 AT THE DEN THEATRE

Refracted Theatre Company is has announced casting for its worldpremiere of Andrew Kramer's dark comedy St. Sebastian, directed by Artistic Director ***Graham Miller***.

The play features ***Nolan Robinson, Mack Spotts*** and ***Adam Thatcher.*** Understudies include ***Matheus Barbee*** and ***Evan B. Smith***.

Launching Refracted Theatre's inaugural Chicago season, this three-hander about a queer white couple that moves into a historically Black neighborhood will be presented September 15 – October 2, 2022 at The Den Theatre (2B), 1331 N. Milwaukee Ave. in Chicago's Wicker Park neighborhood.

Tickets are currently available at ***thedentheatre.com.***

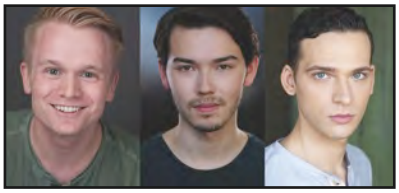
SHATTERED GLOBE THEATRE ANNOUNCES GLOBAL PLAYWRIGHTS SERIES SELECTIONS

Shattered Globe Theatre (SGT) is has announced theinaugural playwrights and plays chosen for its The Global Playwright Series (GPS), a new play development program specifically aimed at BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, neurodiverse and disabled writers and those who fall within intersections of these identities.

SGT's inaugural Global Playwrights Series was conceived to lift up the voices of new, diverseplaywrights by developing their work with a commitment to produce and to form long termconnections between these writers and the SGT ensemble. In SGT's first festival, an impressive151 scripts were read by Producer and ensemble member ***Nate Santana***, Associate ArtisticDirector ***Amber Montgomery*** and five established Chicago artists, as well as Producing ArtisticDirector ***Sandy Shinner.*** The GPS team interviewed fourteen semi- finalists, and nationally-knownplaywright ***Charles Smith*** added his insight by reading the final nine plays. From this talented group of writers, ***Kimberly Dixon-Mays, Phanésia Pharel*** and ***Jasmine Sharma*** were selected to join SGT as the 2022 GPS winners. SGT will be workshopping these three plays throughout its 2022-23 season.

For more information on Shattered Globe Theatre, please visit ***www.shatteredglobe.org.***

CAST ANNOUNCED FOR CHICAGO PREMIERE OF GIRLFRIEND - A BOY-MEETS-BOY MUSICAL BASED ON THE SONGS OF MATTHEW SWEET, OPENING AUGUST 29 AT PRIDE ARTS CENTER



Casting has been announced for PrideArts season opening production - the Chicago premiere of the musical GIRLFRIEND, by Todd Almond and Matthew Sweet, based on Sweet's album of the same name. Set in Nebraska in the 1990s, this heartwarming coming-of-age story is a celebration of friendship, love, and, of course, music. Will, a bit of a social outcast, and Mike, the popular baseball player, start to explore their relationship days after graduation, experiencing the awkwardness and intensity of first love. This romantic musical has been a hit in New York City, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C. and elsewhere since its premiere in Berkeley, CA in 2010. The WASHINGTON POST said of it, "All you need to know about the intensity of teenage crushes is captured...in GIRLFRIEND, the tenderly truehearted rock musical that seems primed for cult-hit status." GIRLFRIEND will open to the press on Monday, August 29, 2022, following previews from August 25-28, and will play through September 25th. GIRLFRIEND will be directed by PrideArts Artistic Director Jay Españo, with music direction by Jeff award-winner Robert Ollis, accompanied by a high-energy, onstage rock band that provides back-up vocals.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TICKETS VISIT ***www.pridearts.org*** or by phone at ***773-857-0222.***

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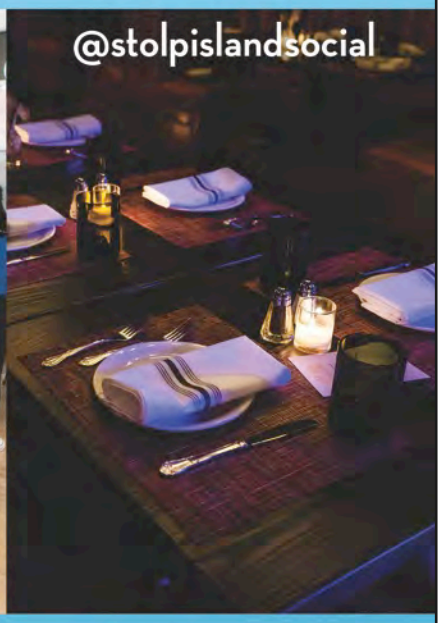

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